

## Free radical scavenging activity of some plants available in Malaysia

### Abstract

The present study was carried out to determine the free radical scavenging properties of some plants found in Malaysia such as, *Muntingia calabura*; *Bauhinia purpurea*; *Dicranopteris linearis*; *Melastoma malabathricum*; *Corchorus capsularis*. The air-dried leaves of each plant (20 g) were soaked in distilled water (1:20; w/v) for 72 h at room temperature. The collected supernatants were tested for the free radical scavenging activity against the DPPH and superoxide anion radical scavenging assays. All extracts were found to show remarkable antioxidant activity in both assays with the percentage of inhibition (%) yielded 94–99% and 83–100%, respectively. Phytochemicals screening of all plants demonstrated the presence of flavonoids, saponins, triterpenes and steroids, but not alkaloids. Tannins were detected only in the leaves of *M. calabura*, *D. linearis*, *M. malabathricum*. The ability to scavenge free radicals indicates these plants could be used as a new source of antioxidant agents, and the activity seen could be attributed to the synergistic effect of various bioactive compounds present in these extracts, particularly of the flavonoids type. Further study has been designed in our laboratory to isolate and to identify the bioactive compounds responsible for the observed antioxidant activity.